



天主教澳門教區
DIOCESE DE MACAU
CN/1/001/2021

Chancery Notice

Fasting and Abstinence during Lunar New Year and Lent 2021

Bishop Stephen LEE makes public the following arrangements:

1. **Ash Wednesday** (17th February) - Day of Fasting and Abstinence (please refer to the “Norms on the practice of fasting and abstinence” below).
2. **From the first day of the Lunar New Year to the fifteenth** - Because of the New Year festivities, the faithful are dispensed from Friday abstinence (12th, 19th and 26th Feb). However, the faithful are encouraged to observe penance in suitable ways, including voluntary abstinence, and to perform works of piety and mercy.
3. **Good Friday** (2nd April) - Day of Fasting and Abstinence.

Norms on the practice of fasting and abstinence

One of the requirements of the Christian life is to do penance, i.e., to convert by repenting for one’s sins and doing mortification. To repent is an act of faith whose end is to love and to turn back to God. Without this conversion, the repentance becomes mere formalism.

To provide for common acts of penance for the entire Church, she has set certain penitential days. On those days, Christians should dedicate themselves to prayer, to devotional practices, acts of charity and almsgiving, and self-denial through the faithful fulfilment of one’s duties. In the universal Church, penitential days include Fridays of the year and the season of Lent. “Penance” includes fasting, abstinence, and other acts that can take their place.

- I. Abstinence and fasting are to be observed on Ash Wednesday and on the Friday of the Passion and Death of Our Lord Jesus Christ (Good Friday). (*)
 - a) **Fasting:** It means that one eats only one full meal in a day. However, one may take small portions of simple food for the other two meals.
 - b) **Abstinence:** refers to refraining from meat and eating only simple and modest food.
- II. Obligatory days for abstinence: Abstinence is to be observed on Fridays throughout the year, unless they are liturgical solemnities, feast days and important Chinese festivities identified by the local Church authority.
 - a) During the time of Lent, no substitution by other works of charity or prayers are allowed without the prior approval of the parish priest.
 - b) Outside Lent, the Church authority has approved that the observance of abstinence can be substituted by special prayers (e.g.: Way of the Cross, Rosary, Bible reading, attending Mass, etc.) or almsgiving (donation to churches or charity institutions according to one’s capacity, or avoiding excessive expenditure, etc.) to substitute the abstinence.



天主教澳門教區
DIOCESE DE MACAU

III. Age for observing fasting and abstinence:

- a) Abstinence: All faithful completing 14 years old or above should observe the abstinence.
- b) Fasting: All faithful from 18 to 59 years old should observe fasting.

P.S.: Priests and parents should ensure that those who are not bound by the provisions of the fasting and the abstinence can understand the true meaning of repentance.

VI. Faithful who are weak, sick and pregnant are excused from the above-mentioned norms on fasting and abstinence.

For Fridays, we would like to urge all faithful to live a spirit of mortification and simplicity, and to avoid having festivities or organizing rich meals, especially in the season of Lent so as to observe the Church's penitential tradition on Fridays.

(* 2021: Ash Wednesday – February 17; Good Friday – April 2)

Given at the Chancery Office, 12th January 2021
Rev. Cyril Jerome LAW, Jr.
Chancellor